

Rugby Union International: Wales 20 South Africa 28

## Springboks tame the fiery dragon

Ian Mallin at Wembley

**S**COTT GIBBS was the first player down the tunnel at the end of this breathtaking match. He never looked back as Nick Mallin, the Springboks' coach, put a consoling arm around Gibbs' inebriated team-mates while the chants "Wales, Wales" reverberated around Wembley Stadium.

Gibbs could not wait for the desolate silence of the dressing-room. Because his team had believed that not only could they stand toe-to-toe with the world champions, they could leave beaten them.

Wales, a nation whose glorious history has been knocked by a wretched recent past, are also refusing to look back. Graham Henry, the coach from New Zealand for whom this was a baptism of fire, said of the 96-13 defeat in Pretoria last June: "We did not even think of that day. We are not dwelling on the past, just adapting to the present."

Most critics had dreaded another thumping for Wales. Instead, the heavy links of South Africa, who had arrived in Britain intent on rolling over the four nations on successive Saturdays, needed to be extra flame-resistant. They were met by a dragon emerging from his cave and breathing fire again.

Even the Welsh Rugby Union president, Sir Trefor Watkins, talked in downcast terms in the match programme of "staring into an abyss" when he had witnessed the biggest defeat in history of a major rugby nation five months ago. But only three players survived from that under-strength side, and Gibbs, the captain Robert Howley, Scott Quinnell and Neil Jenkins have been victorious with the Lions in South Africa. The backbone of this Wales team are proud men and, as Howley said, "We were not pre-

pared to be the whipping boys any longer."

And so, as the game approached the end of 90 minutes, the teams seemed at least assured of a "winning draw" to match England's 28-25 result at Twickenham last December which had deprived the All Blacks of a 100 per cent record for 1997. The Springboks then found the extra reserves that distinguish great sides from good ones.

From a line-out close to the Welsh 22, Jost van der Westhuizen attacked after the ensuing maul. The scrum-half's pass was knocked into the air by John Erasmus and Andre Venter, Erasmus's back-row colleague, plunged over. South Africa were off the ropes and six minutes into stoppage time, Franco Smith's third penalty earned a 15th successive Test win.

The extra minutes had been added on by the Australian referee Stuart Dickinson because of injuries — and a tanker.

Welsh concentration was disturbed, and the South Africans came storming back. Wave after wave of attacks crashed against the red defensive wall, images of Stanley Baker and Rorke's Drift kept hovering into view, until Wales were at last penalised for offside and Smith kicked an equalising penalty.

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Up for grabs... Collis Chavira of Wales tries to steal possession off South Africa's Pieter Rossouw

Rossouw counter-attacked, for once the tactic of Jenkins was maintained, and Van der Westhuizen was handed a gift try.

He broke Welsh hearts, but Henry's plan to pick a side which could match the Springboks and play bold, ball-in-hand rugby, had shaken the visitors. Scotland could feel the backlash this Saturday.

As Mallin said: "We get judged on the quality of our win rather than the quality of our loss. It's a cruel game, but it's a cruel game."

While it was pleasing to see England moving the ball sweetly through hands like French backs on a good day, it will be more relevant to discover whether they alter under pressure against the superbly shrewdly organised Italians.

Meanwhile, Ireland dispatched Georgia 70-0 in their quarter at Black, offered the thought: "All the good work will come to nothing if we fail to beat Argentina next weekend." And he added: "How was my Welsh accent? Sounded perfect, Shane, huh."

Robert Armstrong added: England, mindful of the major hurdles round the corner, took only passing satisfaction from their biggest interna-

tional win over a motley collection of carpenters, policemen, students and computer consultants in their World Cup qualifier at the Malpas Stadium, Hilderfield.

Clive Woodward, the England coach, will not dwell long on the record 18 tries that helped put the Netherlands to the sword by 10-0 as he considers his options for Sunday's game against a dangerous-looking Italian side at the same Yorkshire venue.

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Rugby League

## Kiwis denied a whitewash

Andy Wilson at Vicarage Road

**G**REAT BRITAIN'S 23-23 draw against New Zealand last Saturday avoided a whitewash and will have given them heart ahead of the 2000 World Cup.

Nell Tennell, the chief executive of the Rugby Football League, had compared the back ground to the third Test of the third in Sydney 10 years ago when an injury-hit Great Britain, written off after a 34-14 mauling by Australia in Brisbane, achieved a stunning 28-12 success. That victory marked the start of seven years of international credibility.

Midway through the second half here the Lions were starting at a repeat of the second Test capitulation at Bolton. The wonderfully talented Kiwis were an eight-point half-time deficit to share with three dazzling tries by the Paul brothers.

But this time Great Britain, led by their half-backs Steve Long and Tony Smith, and bolstered by the impressive debutant hooker Terry Newton, hung in and fought back.

Long's individual try, the highlight of a bubbly first start appearance, cut the deficit to 22-10 and even after Steven Lush had given New Zealand extra breathing space, Great Britain forged a 78th-minute try from Smith following good work by Long, Keith Senior and Francis Cummins.

Then they snatched the draw through Smith's first drop goal from the last kick of the game.

"Great Britain have got a side they can build on for the World Cup," said New Zealand's generous coach Frank Endacott. "They've got some good players who will be cherry ripe for the World Cup." So will New Zealand.

The forward nucleus of this team — Stephen Kearney, Jarrod McCracken and the captain Quentin Ponson — each have at least two more years in them, and Henry and Robbie Paul have come of age on the international stage. Jones, a runaway Man of the Series, may already be the best scrum-half in the world at the age of 22.

Andy Goodway, the Great Britain coach, will concur with Tennell and the RFU's technical director Joe Lyon to squeeze some decent preparation for next year's tri-series into a season already over-congested by the Super League clubs' expansion to 30 rounds.

"For all the inexperience in the side, they have performed so magnificently over the past three weeks," said Goodway. "But we're only eight months into a three-year job. We feel there is a lot more to come."

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## Russia mourns the assassination of popular MP Galina Starovoitova



An elderly man in St Petersburg offers flowers to Galina Starovoitova's memory

## A shot in the heart of democracy

James Mack in Moscow

**A**LITTLE over four years ago, a woman stood in the biting wind of a dark October day in Moscow, in front of the Palace of Youth listening to a journalist speak to a crowd of mourners grieving over the death of a colleague, 27-year-old Dmitri Kholodov, whose legs had been blown off by a suicide bomb in his office.

The red dividing line in Russia today is not between communists and democrats, but between honest and dishonest people," said the speaker, Alexander Litvin.

The woman was Galina Starovoitova, one of Russia's most uncompromising democratic idealists. On Friday last week, she became the latest victim of the assassin's bullet. Her political allies believe that she fell as a combatant in the struggle between "democrats" and "red-browns" — the communists.

nationalist forces hoping one day to rule Russia. Whether this was the case, or whether she died in a more tortured Russian struggle between honesty and dishonesty, good and crime and punishment, only the detectors can say for certain. And their record on high-profile hits has not good.

Use the Kholodov killing, the Starovoitova murder enters history as a warning sign in Russia's post-Soviet struggle for law and order. But, the cynics would argue, what has changed? Then, as now, it seemed clear that the slaying had been political. Then, as now, president Boris Yeltsin promised personal action to ensure that the case was solved. Then, as on Tuesday at St Petersburg, a vast crowd of citi-

nary people vented their grief at the death of someone who still dared to fight the fight against cynicism they had given themselves up to. Politicians have wrung their hands, detectives and forensic scientists have swarmed over the crime scene — and no one has been charged. No one has been tried. No one is guilty.

Starovoitova, an MP representing the party Democratic Russia, died from three bullets to the head after entering the stairwell in the canal-side tenement in central St Petersburg where she had her flat.

She died immediately. Her spokesman, Russian Linkov, who was with her, was hit in the back of the head and in the neck, but sur-

## There is a well of hatred sunk deep into Russia. And weapons are all too easy to come by

vived. The killers abandoned their weapons on the scene, as is usual in Russia.

The weapons were unusual — not the Russian-made TT pistol and Kalashnikov of rank-and-file criminals. One was a Beretta pistol, which, according to unspecified forensic traces left on the trigger, was fired by a woman; the other was an Argon-2000 machine pistol, once favoured by US special forces but now manufactured under licence in the former Yugoslavia.

The Balkan connection has led St Petersburg democrats to make a link with the "red-browns", Russian

nationalists and self-styled Cosaks did fight on the Serbian side in the Yugoslav wars, and there are indications of links between Serbian extremists, post-Soviet conflicts such as the war in Moldova, and radical Russian politicians such as the anti-Communist MP Albert Makin, whom Starovoitova clashed with a few days before her death.

"The most likely version is that the hand of the red-brown bigots is behind this," said Sergei Alexeyev, deputy chairman of the executive committee of Democratic Russia's St Petersburg branch. "Galina spoke in favour of passing a law on the forbidding of communist and fascist activity in Russia. She considered both equally dangerous for democracy. The communists stated that this was a witchhunt. And now we see that the red-browns went hunting themselves."

The evidence is circumstantial. Yet there is a well of hatred sunk deep into Russia of which General Makin is only the mouth. There are numerous fascist and extreme nationalist groups who share a vicious anti-Semitism with a broader hostility towards all foreigners and a cult of militarism. And in Russia, weapons are all too easy to come by.

Starovoitova was one of the few remaining active liberals from the early days of Yeltsin's anti-communist struggle who combined all the faults that the extremists actively despise and many ordinary Russians passively dislike — multiculturalism, political pluralism and the idea of a law-based society. But the worst further: she was radical on every front, as economically liberal

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# The Guardian Weekly

## Pentagon to trim nuclear arsenal

Martin Kettle in Washington

**T**HAT the Pentagon is planning big unilateral reductions in the United States' nuclear weapons arsenal, according to reports in Washington which military chiefs conspicuously failed to deny on Monday.

If implemented by the Clinton administration and approved by Congress, the cuts would take US nuclear warheads below the 5,000 warheads level allowed by the 1991 START I arms limitation treaty, and would save the Pentagon hundreds of millions of dollars.

Washington's readiness to press ahead with a fresh round of cuts came as the US defence secretary, William Cohen, recently attacked the German government's proposals for Nato to adopt a "no first use" nuclear weapons policy.

"It is an integral part of our strategic concept and we think it should remain exactly as it is," Mr Cohen said. "There is good rationale for keeping it as it is."

The German-US argument is likely to intensify in the build-up to Nato's 50th anniversary summit in Washington next April, and will inevitably put other European Nato powers — including Britain — on the spot. But the Pentagon's determination to stamp on any rethink of the doctrine coincides with its evident readiness to cut US stockpiles, another issue with implications for nuclear powers such as Britain.

For several weeks the Clinton administration and Pentagon officials have been privately discussing ways in which nuclear weapons levels can be reduced below Start 1 levels without waiting for Russia to ratify the Start 2 treaty. This pact demands a reduction of nuclear warheads to 3,000-3,500 and was signed in 1993, but it has been before the Russian parliament ever since.

On Monday the Pentagon said that no report on fresh arms reduction plans had been circulated to Mr Cohen, but this limited denial underlines the likelihood that the issue is about to return to centre stage.

The principal pressure on the Pentagon is financial. Russia's delay in signing Start 2, and a US law prohibiting unilateral cuts below Start 1 levels mean the US defence department is having to spend huge and growing sums maintaining — and even rebuilding — weapons it has committed itself to scrapping.

According to one report, the costs of delay will mount steeply. Over the two years the Pentagon has spent \$85 million it would have saved had Start 2 taken effect.

The US now alone faces spending more than \$5 billion between now and 2003 to refresh nuclear reactors and install new pipelines on four Indian subcontinent that should otherwise have been dismantled.

Officially, the administration line remains that no discussions are expected before the Russian parliament completes its latest discussions of Start 2. A vote in the lower house could come next month.

But with Mr Clinton's presentation of the federal budget for 2000 to the newly elected Congress just weeks away, and with the annual State of the Union speech due on January 20, the pressure on the administration to find extra savings is intensifying.

Administration officials believe that the budget pressures are even more daunting in Moscow, and that they open up the possibility that Russia's economic crisis will finally force the parliament to ratify Start 2. Regardless of events in Moscow, there are increasing signs that the Clinton administration is prepared to press on alone.

"You will inevitably see us take some unilateral actions" to modernise our forces and maybe streamline our forces," the head of US strategic command, Admiral Richard Mies said.

Aside from the budget squeeze, political pressures for a US initiative are also increasing. In a speech last week a Democratic senator, Bob Kerry, called on the administration to make unilateral nuclear cuts to reassure Russia and re-energise the reduction process.

Under Start 1 the US has reduced its strategic nuclear warheads from 10,000 to about 7,000. Last year Mr Clinton and President Yeltsin of Russia agreed that they would begin talks on reductions to 2,000-2,500 warheads each, once Start 2 was approved.

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Saddam aide survives attack

Indonesia mobs target Christians

Chinese face death by smoking

British beef back on menu

Allstar Cooke looks back at 90

Austria	ASB0	Malta	80c
Belgium	BSB0	Netherlands	G 6
Denmark	DKT0	Norway	N 16 18
Finland	FM 10	Portugal	E300
France	FR 14	Saudi Arabia	SR 0.50
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## Jakarta mob hacks Christians to death

John Aglionby in Jakarta

**T**HOUSANDS of Muslim rioters in the Indonesian capital Jakarta last weekend, hacking at least seven Christians to death and injuring scores more as deep-seated animosities erupted into more than eight hours of street violence.

A week after 18 people were killed in the city in several days of political unrest, north and west Jakarta again reverberated to the sounds of gunfire, tear gas and burning buildings as mobs of Javanese Muslims rampaged through the streets to destroy all Christian symbols.

At least 11 churches were attacked. One was razed to the ground, three badly burnt, three others seriously damaged and the rest had windows smashed and doors beaten in.

The hysterical rioters then turned their fury on Christian neighbourhoods, storing and burning houses and shops all afternoon until brought to their senses by the dusk call to prayer.

"We are Islamic gentlemen and they are Christian pigs," one young man said between throwing stones into a barricaded Christian alley.

Most of the anger was directed towards the community from Ambon, a Christian island 8,000 km east of Jakarta. It was sparked by rumours that Ambonians who had been gambling last Saturday burned three Jakarta mosques during pre-dawn prayers. The result was that a few stones were thrown at one mosque.

The retaliation began with an attack on the nearest church to the



Muslim rioters toss debris on to a car they had set alight during ethnic and religious rampage in Jakarta.

vandalised mosque. Hundreds of people, many claiming to be from a group called the Front to Defend Islam (FPI), first threw stones at the Protestant church and then stormed the building, quickly setting it alight.

Those inside fled out the back but three people were caught by the mob and hacked to death. The bodies were then jumped upon and beaten with sticks. An ear was cut from one body and paraded triumphantly around the street.

News of the carnage quickly spread to other churches, which were evacuated. "There were about 30 of us in the building when we heard what was happening," said the Rev Andrus Kambur, vicar of a church about 3 km from the scene of the first assault. "We got everyone out and locked all the doors." Five minutes later it was attacked.

The congregation of another church barricaded the building wall to prevent the mob entering, so the rioters set fire to build-

ings on either side in an attempt to burn the church.

Hundreds of troops and riot police were deployed to the area but they, too, were set upon.

Most of the violence occurred in the city's Chinatown but the Chinese were not singled out. "This is more of a religious-ethnic issue," said Solomon Chandra, who guarded a church for rioters.

Like the famine in southern Sudan, Somalia's food shortages are mostly man-made. "We are very worried by the parallel that we are seeing with... southern Sudan this time last year, as well as the Somali famine of 1992," said Brenda Barrow, an information officer with the WFP.

## Somalia faces threat of new famine

David Gough in Xuddur

**T**HE threat of famine hangs over war-torn southern Somalia, for the second time in six years. The United Nations World Food Programme says as many as 300,000 people are at imminent risk of starvation.

Edward Kallon, the WFP's programme co-ordinator for Somalia, said: "The situation is critical and WFP has no option but to divert all available resources to saving lives in Bay and Bakool."

Mr Kallon added that if the international community did not act immediately, there would be severe famine in the area early next year.

Bay and Bakool, the traditional breadbasket districts of Somalia, are worst hit, with food shortages brought on by a civil war that has displaced a large number of people. Floods early in the year and the failure of recent rains have combined to worsen the crisis.

This area was worst hit by the famine of 1991-2 which killed 550,000 people. Operation Blue Hope, a military intervention led by the United States, was designed to ensure safe distribution of food aid, but ended in expensive failure.

Since 1991, when the dictator Mohammed Siad Barre was forced to flee the country, Somalia has been without a central government and ruled by militia who fight each other for regional control.

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## Nigeria begged by lootocracy

Cameron Duodu

**F**IVE months after the death of Nigeria's military dictator, General Sani Abacha, the amount of money revealed to have been stolen by him and his family has become so staggering that his name now sinks more richly even than that of Mobutu Sese Sese Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo).

Mobutu hid his stolen wealth in secret bank accounts abroad, but the Abacha family preferred ready cash. According to the government that took over from him on June 8, no less than \$750 million in foreign currency has been retrieved from the family.

As a result, Abacha is being commemorated in songs of abuse, written specially for him. One guest: "Abacha, Sani Abacha! A-bu-cher of Abacha! You were a kleptomaniac. Dead, you've turned a lootocracy! No wonder Kama Sutra. Snuffed out your stinking aura."

The reference is to the Kama Sutra alludes to reports that Abacha met his end during an overzealous tryst with two courtesans, and that he had imported Viagra pills for the occasion.

His wife Maryam was more interested in money. A few weeks after his death, she was stopped at Kano airport trying to leave for Saudi Arabia "to rest" after the ordeal of her husband's funeral. She was travelling with 28 suitcases.

As a Muslim woman, she would have been expected to go into purdah when she arrived in Saudi Arabia. So the amount of luggage she was carrying for such an austere rite aroused suspicion. The suitcases were seized and found to be full of foreign currency.

One of Abacha's sons was also caught with about \$100 million on him. During his father's rule, he drove two different coloured Ferraris despite the traffic jams in Lagos and most Nigerian cities.

A further two to three billion dollars are estimated to be in the hands of Abacha's foreign frontmen. Abacha made use of the services of Lebanese merchants, particularly the Chagory brothers, for his overseas financial operations.

The Washington Post reported on November 22 last year that Gilbert Chagory made "a contribution of \$460,000 to Vote Now 96, an organisation closely associated with the Democratic National Committee

in the United States. As a result, Chagory was able to "attend a White House holiday dinner with President Clinton" in 1997 for 250 top Democratic National Committee donors, although Chagory was not a party contributor and could not legally give to the Democratic.

Mallam Mohammed Haruna, chief press officer for the new head of state, General Abdulsalam Abubakar, told reporters in Abuja that full-scale investigations are going ahead to try to locate any of Abacha's money hidden abroad.

His greed has added a word to the African political dictionary — lootocracy. Abacha deliberately starved Nigeria's two oil refineries of the funds they needed to stay operational. As a result — and not without it — it is one of the world's most important oil-producing countries.

Nigeria regularly ran short of petrol. Abacha would wait for riots at petrol stations, then give licences to his business cronies to import refined fuel into the country. They could charge whatever they liked because of the "short notice" they had been given.

The recovery of the \$750 million from the Abacha family was made possible by the squalling of



Women beg on Sani Abacha Way in Kano

PHOTO: DAVID OUTHRELL

Abacha's former security adviser, Ismail Gwarzo. Gwarzo himself also hunted over \$250 million, which he had withdrawn a few days before Abacha died.

The money was to have been taken to a conference of the Organisation of African Unity, to be distributed to African heads of state whom Abacha wanted to influence.

Newspaper reports in Nigeria have feared Gwarzo is trying to protect himself, for, like him, he is no novice in the lootocratic values. Gwarzo owns 28 choice properties in the federal capital, Abuja. He is under house arrest. — The Observer

## Rail strikes bring chaos to roads across Europe

Paul Webster in Paris

**A**LL traffic ground to a halt across the Continent on Monday as rail workers began strikes against European Union plans to open the freight market to competition.

Strikes stranded passengers and goods in Belgium and severely disrupted rail traffic in France, Greece and Luxembourg.

In Britain, Austria, Germany and the Netherlands rail workers expressed opposition to the plans, but through leaflets, news conferences and letters to transport ministers rather than industrial action, unions said.

The strike action threatened to be most serious in France, where railway workers called for an indefinite strike to start this weekend. A one-day stoppage severely affected French traffic on Monday.

Exceptions included the Eurostar shuttle between London and Paris, which was running normally. Eurostar trains to Brussels were severely disrupted.

The strike call in France added to growing disaffection in the leftwing coalition government and among its supporters.

The Socialist prime minister, Lionel Jospin, whose popularity has slid in polls for the first time since his appointment 17 months ago, appeared to government partners to stop quarrelling. He faces allegations that his key policies, including

those on welfare reform, immigration and privatisation, are derived from those of Alain Juppé.

Mr Juppé, the former Gaullist prime minister, led the right to defeat in June 1997. Communists and Greens in the coalition have created a similarly hostile to Mr Jospin in the run-up to European elections next June.

They have been joined by the Socialist party left wing, a quarter of the executive. Marie-Noëlle Lénormand last weekend accused Mr Jospin of restricting party democracy, while another leftwinger, Julien Dray, said he had embarked on a programme of "creeping privatisation" — a reference to sell-offs in telecommunications, banks and air transport.

Six French rail unions joined the action over EU deregulation plans and have called out workers for at least 48 hours from Friday to back shorter hours and better conditions in France. Protests are planned by hospital, post office, telecommunications and job centre workers.

EU unions see deregulation plans drawn up by the European transport commissioner, Neil Kinnock, as another form of privatisation.

Mr Kinnock told EU transport ministers on Monday that only 14 per cent of European freight was carried by rail because of competition from road hauliers, and that there might be no rail traffic at all by 2012 unless restrictions on state rail operators were removed.

## Ailing Yeltsin meets Jiang

James Mack in Moscow

**D**OUBTS about whether Boris Yeltsin will be able to cling to office until his retirement in 2000 intensified this week as it was revealed that the Russian president had been admitted to hospital with pneumonia.

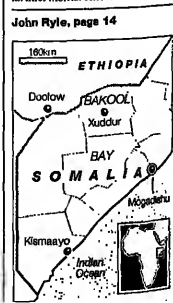
Fighting to show he could still be head of state, Mr Yeltsin, aged 67, refused to cancel a meeting with the Chinese president, Jiang Zemin, inviting him into his room in Moscow's Central Clinical Hospital, where he was admitted on Sunday.

Russian television showed almost surreal silent footage of the leader of the world's largest country and the leader of the world's most populous sitting opposite each other. Mr Yeltsin made characteristic extravagant

arm gestures but it was impossible to tell what he was saying. This show of life may not save him from the ignominy of forced retirement if sufficient political pressure builds up to persuade his immediate circle, in particular his family, to tell him he must step down for health reasons.

The most likely successor would be the prime minister, Yevgeny Primakov. Constitutionally, he is already Mr Yeltsin's son-in-law, and has in many respects become Russia's leader. In the past, Mr Yeltsin's ailments caused stock markets to tremble. Since the collapse of the ruble and Mr Primakov's rise, the situation has changed. On Monday Moscow's stock market soared.

Washington Post, page 18



## Argentina confronts links with Nazis

UKI Goni in Buenos Aires

**A**RGENTINA is slowly drawing aside the veil on the refugee granted by its late president, Juan Peron, and his wife Evita to fugitives of Hitler's Third Reich during the late 1940s and early 1950s, when the country became a haven for Nazi Germany war criminals.

Historians from all over the world who make up the governments' Commission for the Clarification of Nazi Activities in Argentina (Cena) are conferring in Buenos Aires and

will make public their first report on their investigations this week.

As witness to Argentina's "neutrality" during the second world war and the possible complicity between Argentina, the Vatican and the Allies to hide a reserve of anti-communist Nazis in Latin America.

"This is a painful process for us," the Peronist foreign minister, Guido Di Tella, But spits are already opening up within the government. "If it is going to be the official version then it's unacceptable," said Shimon Samuels, vice-president of

the Nazi-hunting organisation, the Simon Wiesenthal Centre.

Critics are disappointed by the figure Cena puts on Nazi war criminals in Argentina. The commission says only 150 war criminals entered Argentina, not "thousands" as some have estimated.

## Russian voice of reason

Obituary  
Galina Starovoltova

**G**ALINA Starovoltova, who died aged 52 in a burst of automatic gunfire outside her flat in St Petersburg last week, was the latest Russian politician to fall victim to assassins.

But unlike many others, Starovoltova was a long way from the crime-forged end of the political spectrum. A co-chair of the reformist Democratic Russia party, she was a liberal politician who championed unpopular causes.

While the Duma, the lower house of the Russian parliament, to which she was most recently elected in 1995, became steadily more nationalist and hardline, Starovoltova remained an advocate of policies born

facing the threat of forced expatriation in retaliation. Starovoltova travelled to the region with the human rights campaigner Andrei Sakharov, with whom she would later work closely in parliament. "I think that a nation's right to self-determination is more important than the idea of state sovereignty," she declared, to the fury of the Azerbaijanis.

Born in the Urals city of Chelyabinsk to a Belorussian father and a Russian mother, Starovoltova graduated from the Leningrad College of Military Engineering in 1966, took a MA in social psychology from Leningrad University in 1971, and in 1980 gained a doctorate in social anthropology from the Institute of Ethnography at the USSR Academy of Sciences, where she worked for 17 years. Her doctoral thesis, published in 1987, was a study of the Tatars of Leningrad. She also published books on anthropology and cross-cultural studies.

When the first semi-free elections took place for the Congress of People's Deputies, Starovoltova was — to surprise — nominated by an Armenian research institute in an Armenian constituency and elected in 1989. In the new parliament — whose sessions were broadcast live on television — she joined the inter-regional grouping of deputies, a radical force pushing for faster democratisation. She spoke up for parliamentary control over the ministries of defence and the interior, and the KGB. She was elected to the human rights commission of the Congress.

In June 1990, when her term in the Congress was set to run, Starovoltova gained election to the Duma in a constituency in Leningrad, not long before the city reverted to its pre-revolutionary name of St Petersburg. The following year she was elected a member of the Democratic Russia leadership.

In the August 1991 referendum, she was elected a member of the Supreme Soviet, the body that replaced the parliament. She was elected a member of the Supreme Soviet, the body that replaced the parliament. She was elected a member of the Supreme Soviet, the body that replaced the parliament.

Galina Yevgenyevna Starovoltova, ethnographer and politician, born May 17, 1946 died November 20, 1998



Starovoltova: Championed those who thought had got a raw deal

of tolerance and respect for individual rights, challenging such brutal Vladimir Zhirinovskiy and denouncing the anti-Semitism that has become common currency among some communists and nationalists.

She became widely known in the late Soviet period as a champion of those who considered to have had a raw deal, especially the Armenians, then fighting to gain sovereignty from Azerbaijan.

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of tolerance and respect for individual rights, challenging such brutal Vladimir Zhirinovskiy and denouncing the anti-Semitism that has become common currency among some communists and nationalists.

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## 6 INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### Starr performance in a political farce



#### Washington diary

Martin Kettle

AT THE end of Kenneth Starr's long day of testimony before the House Judiciary committee last week, two notable things happened which failed to make the morning editions of the American papers.

First, the committee chairman Henry Hyde expressed his thanks to the witness. Starr left, after all, having given evidence since 10am that day, and it was now more than 12 hours later. So he deserved the expression of gratitude extended to him by the chairman. Yet the words that Hyde chose were striking. He said: "Thank you, Judge Starr, for a wonderful day. Thank you."

No sooner had we got over the shock of this glowing statement than another extraordinary thing happened: people in the Rayburn Building committee room began to applaud. Around the seated Starr, they stood and clapped. On the Republican benches to Hyde's right, they also got to their feet, booming and giving the independent counsel a standing ovation as he rose and departed from his home in Virginia.

Now it is true that Starr's performance was in some respects prodigious. For most of the morning, he read calmly from his long prepared statement on the impeachment in-

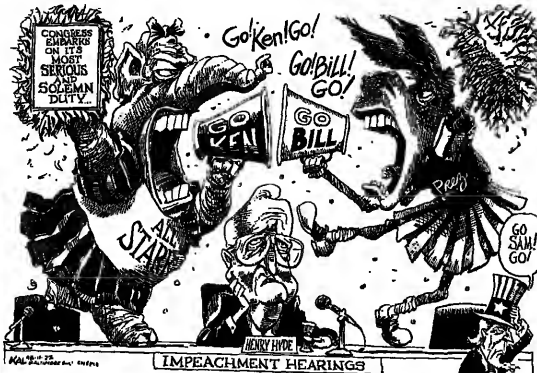
vestigation. Then, after a brief break for lunch, he faced questioning from, firstly, the Democrats' lawyer Abbe Lowell and then each of the 37 members of the committee. Pleading for a sandwich in the early evening, he then squared up for an hour to Bill Clinton's lawyer David Kendall, before the day's events concluded with a much easier session involving the Republican counsel David Schippers.

It was easy to forget amid the long hours of testimony and questioning what this occasion was really about — or at least what it purported to be. This was the first day of only the third impeachment inquiry into a United States president in the nation's history. It was, supposedly, a day of solemn seriousness in a process of apparently high constitutional gravity.

In which case, how could this have been appropriately described as a *wonderful day*? And what did the stalling ovation tell us, bearing in mind that it was given to a man whose job was to find the facts and report to Congress, but who has interpreted that job — as it appears, he is entitled to do — as an invitation to construct a prosecution case which downplays innumerable evidence and which generally conceals the motives and actions of some of the case's most important witnesses?

Such dangers were inherent in Starr's acceptance of the invitation to give evidence last week. Almost inevitably, people in the Rayburn Building committee room began to applaud. Around the seated Starr, they stood and clapped. On the Republican benches to Hyde's right, they also got to their feet, booming and giving the independent counsel a standing ovation as he rose and departed from his home in Virginia.

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strong enough to justify a decision by the committee to recommend impeachment," Dash wrote. But Starr eschewed such caution, pressing in mind that it was given to a man whose job was to find the facts and report to Congress, but who has interpreted that job — as it appears, he is entitled to do — as an invitation to construct a prosecution case which downplays innumerable evidence and which generally conceals the motives and actions of some of the case's most important witnesses?

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Democrats. Who now remembers those anguished remarks which so many Democratic members of Congress made, less than two months ago, about Clinton's behaviour? Or those tense September gatherings when red-faced Democrats came down to the White House from Capitol Hill to demand penance from the president?

In pure, this fatalism can be put down to the November 3 election results in which "the American people" were widely deemed to have given their verdict against the process. Certainly that is the view, not just of the president, but also of the man now certain to become the next Speaker of the House, Congressman Bob Livingston of Louisiana, who was unanimously nominated by his party last week. Livingston does not want to inherit an unpopular impeachment inquiry when he formally succeeds Newt Gingrich on January 6. And that, in a nutshell, is that.

The election results are not, however, the only reason for such displays of acrid feeling. Among Clinton's rekindled Republican critics, it has now become fashionable

to say that this whole question is too important to be decided by opinion polls. Starr himself said as much towards the end of his presentation last week. And, in a sense, these protestations are right. Let's give credit where credit is due. These people are not easily swayed. They have been out to get Clinton for years.

This determination to impeach creates problems for Livingston rather than Clinton. It means that there is no tidy exit strategy for the Republicans. In rather, it suggests that the Republican leadership is prepared to see the impeachment effort die on the floor of the House, defeated by the Democrats and a decisive group of defecting Republicans, mainly from the Northeast.

All this is part tragedy and part farce. But what we are witnessing in Washington is also dangerous because it is driving the already deluded political process of the US still further into disrepute.

Of all the crimes that politicians can commit, this is truly the most unforgivable.

Washington Post, page 17

### EU accounts add up to a bureaucratic mess

#### EUROPE THIS WEEK

Martin Walker

STRASBOURG: An annual ritual of this time of year is the European Court of Auditors' report into the waste and incompetence displayed by the European Union in the way it spent its annual \$90 billion budget. This year was no exception, but then this year was not all that it seemed.

To begin with the horror stories: the \$900 million earmarked by the EU for repairing and making safe the nuclear power plants of the old Soviet bloc has been either wasted, lost, defrauded or left unspent. "It is particularly worrying that, at the end of 1997, it was not possible to judge whether there had been any actual progress in terms of nuclear safety," Bernhard Friedmann, president of the Court of Auditors, told the European parliament last week.

The nuclear scandal was simply the most chilling of a series of accounting disasters and bungles afflicting every aspect of Europe's finances. It was also the most alarming, because the EU sought and

won the agreement of the Group of Seven leading industrial nations to manage the international community's response effort for the 85 sick and dangerous Soviet nuclear power plants. Trusted by its allies and Russians alike, the EU bungled the job.

This year's report by the auditors was a bombshell, because it did not list the usual dreary and often piling amounts of fraud, which amount to a few million dollars. Instead, it focused on the mismanagement, bungling and botched accounting which totals more than \$16 billion.

The catalogue of financial disasters unveiled began with the EU's 15 member states, whose own tax collection systems were so poor that they failed to collect \$80 billion of value added tax (VAT) — almost enough to finance the entire EU budget.

The court went on to list a series of administrative and accounting bungles by the Commission itself, starting with "an understatement of the commitments of the year 1997" by almost \$20 million, set (\$20 million) and the understatement of off-

balance sheet commitments by about 4,000 million eu". The Commission was told that it cannot keep track of its funds. "The total value of advances or payments on account registered during the year as budgetary payments is understated by at least 4,126 million eu".

Then the Commission was told that it cannot keep reliable books: "The total amount of debtors representing amounts owed by the member states to the Community institutions and disclosed in the consolidated balance sheet as 1,756.6 million eu is not accurately reflected in the accounts".

And...the Commission often doesn't know what it has spent. "Bank account balances of the Community are not accurately reflected in the balance sheet because amounts held in certain third countries to a value of several hundred million eu have been recorded as budget payments instead of assets. For the Phare programme alone (eastern Europe) the amount was at least 370 million eu".

MEPs listened agape as the full scale of the accounting mess was

laid out before them by Europe's own expert auditors, who had to state that "the incidence of errors affecting the transactions underlying the Commission's payments is so high that the Court has had to give an adverse opinion on legality and regularity". This was a polite, accountant's way of saying that if the EU were a company, its directors would either be bankrupt or in jail by now.

The only kind words for the Commission came from the British Labour MEP, Terry Wynn from Merseyside, who said, "At least budget commissioner Erhard Eilken is genuinely trying to clean all this up, and reforms he has set in motion should improve matters".

Commissioner Eilken looked on the bright side, noting that the majority of both formal and substantial errors occurred in the agricultural and structural programmes, of which more than 80 per cent are managed by the member states. So it wasn't all down to him. Where it was, the commissioner promised reform, transparency and simplified procedures.

Behind all this lies a political intrigue. Bernhard Friedmann, the court president, is a German Christian Democrat, whose MEPs voted

immediately after the report's publication to withhold approval of the Commission's budget, and to threaten a no-confidence vote in the Commission. This would have the effect of barring the 20 commissioners from ever holding European office again.

There is much support for this move in parliament, partly because of this year's catalogue of fraud and mismanagement, but also because the constitutional struggle for power between the Commission and an increasingly assertive parliament is coming to a head.

The blame should mostly lie with bureaucracies of the member states, which actually distribute the money. Commission proposals to improve its own cash management systems are being "blocked" by national governments, which do not want to give Commission auditors too much power to probe what they do with Europe's money.

Finally, parliament is looking for an excuse to show the Commission who is boss, and now they have found one. Interestingly, Eilken is challenging Friedmann to a public debate on the charges laid by the report. So far, the auditor in chief has not risen to the challenge.

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The biggest study into the effects of tobacco has found that smoking-related diseases will eventually kill one in three Chinese men, writes Sarah Boseley

## Selling death to the Chinese

A THIRD of all the young men in China will eventually die of smoking-related diseases, scientists said last week, describing what they called the catastrophic results of an epidemic sweeping the country.

The results of the biggest study into the effects of tobacco, by British, Chinese and American scientists, suggest that cigarettes will kill 100 million Chinese men who are aged under 25. Half of them will die in middle age.

The results of two studies, one looking at 1 million deaths that have already occurred and the other at future trends, were released last week in Beijing and London and published in the British Medical Journal.

To reverse the slide into tobacco-related death and disease will require a huge amount of public education. A recent study showed that two-thirds of Chinese thought cigarettes caused no harm or very little harm. The chances of changing attitudes fast are not good. "It will take the Chinese government some years before the figures become as real to them as they are to us," said the British professor, Dr Richard Peto, the Oxford university epidemiologist who was one of the study authors.

China in the 1980s is at the same stage as the US was in the 1950s, and appears to be following a similar pattern. Average daily consumption in the US rose from one in 1910 to four in 1930 to 10 in 1950, where it sits

bilised for 30 years, until the dangers started to be fully appreciated. Just as is now predicted for China, deaths from smoking-related diseases went up from 12 per cent in the 1950s to 33 per cent in the 1990s.

This "catastrophic epidemic" was homegrown in its beginnings, Professor Peto said. Mao Zedong's slogan was "No shelter and cigarettes for everybody." Western tobacco companies are trying hard to get into the market, but at the moment they have only a 10 per cent share. Alan Lopez, acting chief of the World Health Organisation's epidemiology and burden of disease unit, said a law banning cigarette advertising on radio and television was not always strictly observed. "Formula One has asked for special permission," he said, "and the government said OK. As of next March, television screens will be filled with cigarette advertising running around race tracks."

Dr Lopez said 1 million Chinese a year were expected to die by 2003, 2 million a year by 2025, and 3 million a year by 2050 if people continued to smoke as they were now.

The danger today is worst in those who start young and two-thirds of Chinese men begin smoking under the age of 25. Dr Lopez said cessation rates in the country were extremely low. Preventing children from starting was not enough, because it would not stop the deaths of those smoking now. The one bright spot, Professor Peto said, was that smoking among

women appeared to have decreased. Many were dying as a result of 10 per cent of women taking it up in 1950, but now only 1 per cent of women became smokers.

Researchers from the Chinese Academy of Preventive Medicine, the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences, Oxford University and Cornell University in the US carried out the study, which is unique in focusing on the effect of tobacco on an entire developing nation. Interviews with the families of 1 million people who died were carried out by more than 500 fieldworkers.

The study sought out a quarter of a million men over the age of 40, who were interviewed and medically tested and who will be monitored for decades, tracing the development of the epidemic.

Scientists were surprised to find that the diseases induced by tobacco were not exactly the same as those that kill in Britain, where lung cancer and heart attacks are most common. Only 15 per cent died of lung cancer in China, while 45 per cent died from chronic lung disease and 5 to 8 per cent of each of oesophageal cancer, stomach cancer, liver cancer, stroke, heart disease and tuberculosis. It appears that smoking in China increases those illnesses that are already common.

Josiah Jowell, Britain's Minister for Public Health, said the figures "graphically illustrate the disastrous consequences of smoking". Clive Bates, of Action on Smoking and Health, accused British



Card players in Beijing, gambling with cigarettes. PHOTO: HUI

American Tobacco of trying to keep the Chinese in ignorance of the risks of smoking. The job description for an official post in China that BAT sought to fill two years ago stated that responsibilities included "portraying the company view on smoking and health to key audiences in China".

Le Monde, page 22

### The count

Cigarette consumption in China: 1990s, 100 billion; 1990s, 100 billion; 1990s, 100 billion. Tobacco-related deaths, 1990s, 600,000; 12 per cent of male deaths; 3 per cent of female deaths. Expected deaths per year: 2003, 1 million; 2025, 2 million; 2050, 3 million.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY

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## Fear factor lingers as beef export ban set to be lifted

Stephen Bates in Brussels and James Melillo

BRITAIN this week faces the massive task of restoring foreign consumer confidence in its beef after finally winning the battle to have the 32-month export ban lifted.

The Government, farmers and the meat industry tempered jubilation at winning a crucial vote at a meeting of European Union agriculture ministers by acknowledging how hard it would be to recover overseas markets worth £520 million in 1995, the year before the ban.

A European consumer group warned that confidence in beef remained "shaky", and Tony Blair conceded that winning back trade would take "time and effort". Exports are not expected to start from England, Wales and Scotland until late February or March because production conditions still have to be inspected by EU officials. Sales from Northern Ireland, where the export ban was lifted in June, are still said to be minuscule despite heavy marketing.

The European Commission was this week expected to rubber-stamp the ending of the ban, which has cost the British beef industry more than £4 billion. It will set out the formal steps for lifting the embargo imposed by a 14-1 EU vote in March 1996, a week after the Government lifted the domestic ban on beef from BSE and new variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease, a fatal condition thought to have killed 30 people since 1980.

Only Germany held out against allowing British exports to resume at Monday's agriculture ministers' meeting. Its diplomats said they accepted the measures British had introduced but wanted to be sure they were effective. Luxembourg, Spain, Austria and France abstained.

The UK agriculture minister,

Nick Brown, said: "This is clearly good news for our beef industry... There may be residual consumer prejudice although that is unfair because our beef is among the safest in the Western world."

Exports from Britain must all be deboned beef from cattle whose own histories and those of their mothers can be clearly traced as free of suspected BSE. There will be strict abattoir checks and, as in Britain, no beef for human consumption can be from cattle older than 30 months. The Government will have to show that a compulsory cull of the remaining 4,700 cattle born since 1986 whose mothers subsequently developed BSE is being carried out.

More than 4 million cattle have been slaughtered since the BSE crisis, and that number could double by the time Britain is free of the disease.

The decision will increase pressure on the Government to end its domestic ban on beef-on-the-bone imposed last December, a step ministers have said can be taken only if scientific advisers give the go-ahead.

Shadow agriculture minister Tim Yeo said: "The Government must now press ahead to get the European agriculture ministers to agree to include beef-on-the-bone in the lifting of the export ban."

"They could immediately strengthen their case in this regard by lifting the domestic ban on beef-on-the-bone. In doing so give an immediate vote of confidence in the quality of British beef. Without this it may be hard for the British government to persuade others to buy a product they themselves appear to have so little confidence in."

A recent federation survey of consumer groups in 15 countries found almost unanimous hostility to the ban's lifting, said Joanna Doler, its head of communications. "There is a pretty strong anti-

British sentiment. At every level of society there is a deep-rooted lack of confidence. The belief is that BSE is very prevalent in the UK. There is also a general lack of confidence in the inspection and surveillance measures operating there."

"I don't really see how my marketing campaign can get through the anti-British beef feeling."

Continental farmers, desperate to protect their share of a flooded market, are likely to feel suspicion by telling consumers to beware claims that Britain had cleaned up its act, she said.

The experience of Northern Ireland, whose full-time beef regulators allowed a resumption of exports in June, is grim. Sales remain below 30 tons a month, compared with 1,000 tons before the summer 1996.

France's Minister, the EU agriculture commissioner, said nationalism was another obstacle. "It is clear it is not only a scientific problem. It is a psychological problem and a political problem."

Consumers were more willing to forgive domestic rather than foreign producers, he said. "The British beef industry has a long way to go to restore its reputation."

German consumers were expected to be the most hostile, and Dutch the most forgiving. South American producers, who mostly lifted the domestic ban in 1996, are expected to put up a fierce fight to hold market share.

One Northern Ireland meat exporter, Richard Moore, said the whispering campaign had already started, claiming Brussels had lifted the ban solely for political reasons. The final straw for many farmers was the strong pound, which crippled exports. "That's the killer. Even if Europeans think it's safe, they're not going to pay more for our beef," said Mr Moore.

## Tories call for minister to quit

Guardian Reporters

WILLIAM Hague last weekend called on the Prime Minister to sack Geoffrey Robinson, the multi-millionaire Paymaster General, after it emerged that the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) is investigating his business affairs.

The Tory leader claimed that Mr Robinson's position was "completely untenable" because of his determination to "steal his business affairs in secrecy".

Earlier last week Mr Robinson was forced to make a less than convincing 34-second apology in the Commons for failing to declare a string of directorships to Parliament.

The Standards and Privileges Committee demanded that he make the apology after he failed to declare directorships, identified in two reports, in the Register of Members' Interests. He has now been caught out three times in separate reports by Parliament's watchdogs for not declaring his directorships.

Mr Robinson kept his statement to a bare minimum. He told MPs: "No attempt was made by me at any time to use my position in this House to influence any commercial interest. The oversight concerning registration, for which I apologise, is entirely my responsibility."

Details of a fresh complaint were lodged by David Heathcoat-Amory, the shadow chief secretary to the Treasury to Sir Gordon Downey, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards. This involved the failure to declare his ownership of the London-based Bull Center Incubator, are expected to put up a fierce fight to hold market share.

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The report also criticised the housing of asylum seekers in prisons. At present there are 300-400 asylum seekers housed in Britain's prisons. In the past the UN committee has severely criticised the Royal Ulster Constabulary for its policing of Northern Ireland.

Last week the committee welcomed the continuing process of reforms, including an end to the use of plastic bullets, the closure of Castlereagh internment centre in east Belfast where terrorist suspects are held, and for the RUC to increase its Catholic intake.

http://reports.guardian.co.uk/pinchot

Analysis, page 16



Geoffrey Robinson: 'Conflict of loyalty' alleged

ted he had been a director of from 1980 to 1992.

"Tony Blair said that the Government had to be purer than pure," Mr Hague said. "Does he really think after all this that Geoffrey Robinson is purer than pure? I'm afraid not. It's time for that minister to go."

However, the Tories faced embarrassment themselves when it emerged that Francis Maude, the shadow chancellor, who has led the assault on Mr Robinson, failed to declare an interest as director of a City investment trust before a Commons debate.

No one is suggesting that the 80-year-old Treasury minister has misused Parliament to promote his interests or broken laws to move his millions to tax-free havens. But the feeling among MPs is that he had "in conscious and cavalier attitude" to registering them.

## India's Christians under siege

Suzanne Goldenberg on a worrying wave of religious violence in India

A T 2.30 in the morning, beneath a steady drizzle, two dozen men, wild on drink and the anticipation of violence, walked over the grassy hill to a house, a few miles from the village of Navapada. They pounded on the door and demanded medicine for an ailing child. Inside were four terrified Christians. They asked to see the child, and climbed to the roof for a look. They saw a mob armed with cross-bows, knives and iron rods. The nuns locked themselves in their makeshift chapel, knelt behind the picture of Jesus and prayed. For the next two hours they listened as the men rampaged through the house. But the nuns had no telephone, and the night watchmen had fled, so they opened the door.

"They joined hands and said: 'We are your sisters. We are serving God. Please don't do anything to us,'" says Sister Maria, who reached Navapada after dawn. "They said: 'You are not our sisters, you are our wives.' So outside on the grass, they took them. One sister was used by seven, eight people, one sister was used by five people, two sisters were used by two."

In India, where legend dates the advent of Christianity to 52 AD, where a convent education is seen as a sign of good breeding, the gang rape of the nuns caused a collective gasp of shock. But it was not, as the authorities claim, an isolated incident.



A priest surveys his demolished church. PHOTOGRAPH BY NARAYAN KOUTLOK

Since last March when the coalition led by the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party came to power, the Catholic and Protestant churches have recorded about 40 instances of violence or harassment of Christian institutions or personnel, including the desecration of a convent at Bhabhat, the burning of a church at a Protestant school at Rajkot, the digging up of a newly buried man in a Methodist cemetery, and the razing of a Catholic church at Naroda.

At least 27 attacks are known to

have taken place in the state of Gujarat, about an hour's drive from the spot where the nuns were raped. Gujarat is a stronghold of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (World Hindu Council), which advocates an even more extreme, anti-Western and anti-modern creed than the BJP. Both organisations and the VHP youth wing, the Bajrang Dal, are the agents of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, the fascist organisation which indoctrinated the murderers of Mahatma Gandhi in 1948.

All describe Christianity and

Islam — the usual target of the Hindu chauvinists — as alien. "The church is foreign," says Dr Praveen Togadia, Gujarat general secretary of the VHP. "It is controlled by the Pope. All churches in India are controlled by extra-territorial authorities."

In the first recorded incident, on the night of October 28, the Bajrang Dal descended on a Pentecostal convention in the city of Haridwar, hauled the sleeping delegates into the street and beat them up. The police stood by.

The authorities in Gujarat are equally unconcerned about the violence. In Gandhinagar, the state capital, bureaucrats in the BJP state government felt surprise at the nervousness that has befallen the Christian community. "Oh dear," said PG Ramkhamani, the state's home secretary. "The Catholics think they are going to die."

The junior bureaucrats of the Ramkhamani claims the events on his turf were his isolated incidents — or can be explained away as old disputes over land, and caste tensions in which religion is incidental.

Despite a letter of censure from the National Minorities Commission, which visited Gujarat in August, Ramkhamani will concede only one minor anti-Christian incident, and brides at the suggestion that the BJP authorities are unconcerned at the hate campaign against Christians being conducted by their allies in the VHP.

Dr Togadia of the VHP claims that Christian schools — even those with a majority of Hindu pupils — are engaged in a secret plot of conversion. "Academic institutions are a means to the end for collecting the faithful," he says. "All teaching in India is a means to an

end to proselytise and evangelise. Such accusations are preposterous, given the census figures that require would-be converts to be over-21 and to get a certificate from local bureaucrats.

Most of the attacks on the churches have been in the eastern half of India where the Adivasis — the tribal inhabitants of India — and some argue that it is efforts here that have made Christian churches a target. Not the VHP claims, for telling people they have the secret for solving their problems.

But obstacles can be removed: the congregation of St Mary's church at Naroda, an hour's drive from the spot where the nuns were raped, discovered last April that local Catholics watched and videotaped the church with a video camera, and stole the church's money from the collection box before it was cremated.

The men were from the BJP Council, which is controlled by the BJP Council president Shambhuji Bhargava, who ordered the church to be destroyed.

The House of Lords in England ruled this week on the High Court decision that the 82-year-old cleric entitled to immunity from arrest for offences committed while he was Chile's president. The Spanish authori-

## UN calls on Britain to prosecute Pinochet

Jamie Wilson and John Mulkin

UNITED Nations panel last week called on Britain to prosecute General Augusto Pinochet under the 1948 Convention Against Torture, to which the UK became a signatory in 1988, a country must "take such measures as may be necessary to establish its jurisdiction" against anybody suspected of carrying out acts of torture.

The Attorney General, John Morley, has already turned down one request to launch a private prosecution against the general. He said that there was "insufficient admissible evidence under English law to justify a prosecution."

A spokesman for Amnesty International said that the UN recommendation on torture, issued in 1984, was "a landmark in the history of human rights law" to "respect the principles of international law by trying or extraditing all people suspected of crimes against humanity."

Assessing the UK's overall civil liberties record, the UN panel meeting in Geneva praised the removal of corporal punishment in several overseas dependent territories. The decision to

## UN calls on Britain to prosecute Pinochet

incorporate the European human rights convention was also hailed as a "positive step". But the committee was concerned by the number of deaths in police custody and the apparent failure of the Government to provide an effective investigative mechanism to deal with allegations of police and prison authorities abuse.

The report also criticised the housing of asylum seekers in prisons. At present there are 300-400 asylum seekers housed in Britain's prisons. In the past the UN committee has severely criticised the Royal Ulster Constabulary for its policing of Northern Ireland.

Last week the committee welcomed the continuing process of reforms, including an end to the use of plastic bullets, the closure of Castlereagh internment centre in east Belfast where terrorist suspects are held, and for the RUC to increase its Catholic intake.

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The Guardian Knows its boundaries

## Lords defy European bill for fifth time

Guardian Reporters

THE Government lost its European election bill last week after both sides refused to blink in one of Britain's biggest constitutional confrontations of modern times.

Baroness Jay, the Leader in the Lords, conceded defeat to the Conservatives in this parliamentary session, which ended last week. But she vowed to bring back the bill in the Queen's Speech this week.

She is expected to invoke the rarely used Parliament Act, which gives the Commons primacy over the Lords, to force through the bill.

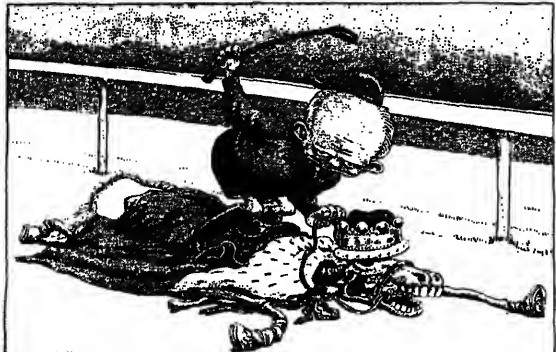
The contentious item is a provision for Britain's European Parliament elections, to be held under a proportional representation system in which the electorate has to vote for parties rather than individual candidates. In this "closed list" system, the party machine also pre-determines the order of candidates on the ballot.

Leaving in the balance by the debate is whether June's European election will be held under the existing first-past-the-post system or proportional representation.

The ongoing battle, in which the Government has been defied and defeated five times by the peers, sets the stage for a fight for survival by the hereditary peers in the new session.

The Government will take swift revenge by introducing in the Queen's Speech its flagship bill to abolish the centuries-old voting rights of hereditary peers.

Baroness Jay told the peers that the election could be held under PR if the bill was on the statute book by



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mid-January, which would require Conservative co-operation. Officials need that much time to prepare for the election.

The Conservative leader, William Hague, will be pleased that he was able to demonstrate that the Opposition, after being almost ineffectual since the 1997 general election, has been able to block the Blair juggernaut — even though the Conservatives may suffer if they have to fight the European election under first-past-the-post.

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## Inquiry into IVF link to cancer

Sarah Boneley

A MAJOR study to establish whether women who have fertility treatment are at risk of getting ovarian cancer was announced this week.

Anxieties over a possible link have been voiced for some time, backed by small-scale research in other countries.

Lia Tilihera, the British editor of the US fashion magazine *Harper's Bazaar*, believes her own ovarian cancer, which nearly killed her, was caused by the powerful drugs used in IVF to stimulate the ovaries into producing eggs. "It is the only thing I held belief that my cancer was linked to," she said.

She wrote a biography, entitled *No Time To Die*, "to highlight the controversy within the scientific community over these drugs — a controversy which suppresses the growing evidence implicating them".

Scientists, backed by the Cancer Research Campaign, will investigate the cases of nearly 3,000 women to try to establish whether IVF drugs pose a cancer risk, and if so how great it is.

Previous studies have suggested that any risk may only become apparent several decades after women have had IVF treatment. The large British study has been made possible only by the one London-based fertility endocrinologist (a specialist in glands like the ovaries) has kept

extensive records of the 6,000 women who saw her over a 30-year career in 1993.

Some 2,700 of Joan Gribble's patients, whose progress she monitored for an average of 20 years from the first consultation, have been selected for the study.

Of these, 700 were given the fertility drugs gonadotrophins, which stimulate the ovaries. Just under a third were exposed to much higher levels of the drugs than are used today. The other 2,000 had infertility problems but were not treated with drugs.

Professor Gordon McVie, director general of the Cancer Research Campaign, said: "If there is a link between the treatment and the risk of ovarian cancer, or infertility and the disease, then we may be a step closer to understanding the causes of the disease. It is... there isn't a link, then it will reassure thousands of women."

Some studies already carried out, mainly in the United States and Australia, have shown a link, but not all have.

But Isabel De Santos Silva, from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, said: "There could be something in women that predisposes them to infertility and to ovarian cancer. It could be genetic."

She also said any risk might have to be balanced against the advantages of successful fertility treatment. Northern Ireland's first Minister, David Trimble and Mr. Ahern are close to agreement on north-south

## Ahern sees Ireland united

Sue Quinn

THE Irish Prime Minister, Bertie Ahern, has forecast there will be a united Ireland within 20 years, fueling unionist anxieties on the eve of an historic visit to the republic by Tony Blair.

Mr. Ahern, who is due to hold talks with Mr. Blair this week on the issue of cross-border bodies, said he believed there would be a united Ireland in his lifetime. "I make no secret of the fact that I would hope in the fullness of time that people will see that it is working together on this island that will make more sense than looking to Westminster, and that they will take a decision to move away from that," he said.

The comments drew an immediate response from unionist leaders, who said Mr. Ahern had revealed the real agenda behind the Good Friday agreement. "It's what is written between the lines. Mr. Ahern has an agreement in place which is a mechanism to take him to a united Ireland," said Peter Robinson, deputy leader of the Democratic Unionist Party.

Mr. Ahern stressed that change could occur only within a climate of peace and with unionist support. "After his talks in Northern Ireland Mr. Blair will fly to Dublin where he is expected to become the first British prime minister to address the two houses of the Irish Parliament on Thursday."

There is mounting speculation that Northern Ireland's first Minister, David Trimble and Mr. Ahern are close to agreement on north-south

body, which will allow policy areas such as food safety, inland waters, business development and languages to be dealt with on an all-Ireland basis.

Meanwhile, the police officer leading the investigation into the Omagh bombing broke down as he mounted a plea to the republican community to help him put behind bars the murderers of 29 people.

Detective Chief Superintendent Eirle Anderson asked anyone who suspected someone of involvement to reflect on the human dimension of the atrocity: "I promise you you will not be bagged, you will not be harassed... I want you to think about this on your own, perhaps even in church on Sunday."

The Real IRA killed 29 people, and left more than 250 injured, when its bomb exploded in the Co. Tyrone market town in August. Mr. Anderson's voice crackling with emotion, told a news conference in Belfast that he had been devastated by Northern Ireland's worst terrorist atrocity. He had three children, and said that no one could remain detached from it.

"We do try not to show emotion in these things but I'm afraid, such was the scene of devastation, that it was so harrowing. It is difficult to get away from that."

Police have arrested 42 people in these things but I'm afraid, such was the scene of devastation, that it was so harrowing. It is difficult to get away from that."

The fact that they had been released without charge did not mean that they had been eliminated from inquiries. He needed the missing pieces to the jigsaw, and asked those in the republican community to examine their consciences.

### In Brief

**MANJIR Kaur Bhatia**, a 43-year-old British nanny, is a stand trial in the United States accused of murdering a 10-month-old baby she cared for at her nursery in California.

**SIPHO JOZANA**, a schizophrenic rap singer who tried to commit suicide in a London police cell, has accepted £10,000 damages from the Metropolitan Police to settle his claim for negligence.

**CHANNEL** tunnel operators have been told to implement a 24-hour emergency watch after admitting that surveillance teams currently patrol for only 15 per cent of the time, and not all during the night.

**THE** drug Tazmar, used by thousands of Parkinson's disease sufferers, has been removed from sale by the European Commission after three patients died taking it.

**ABOUT** 9.5 million people's year — a sixth of the population — may be infected by food poisoning and other stomach bugs, according to the Food Standards Agency.

**ROAD** protesters and civil disobedience campaigners will not be the target of police undercover burgling and bugging operations under a revised Home Office code of practice.

**GLASGOW** city council ruled that a Sioux ghost dance shirt, preserved in a city museum, must be repatriated to South Dakota.

**A WOMAN** prisoner who was denied a place at Holloway's mother and baby unit, and threatened with separation from her newborn child, won her fight to be allowed to keep the baby with her at Styal prison in Cheshire.

**THE** Government is to provide the Commonwealth Institute, guaranteeing the survival of the 30-year-old glass building in west London.

**KATE WINSLET**, the 23-year-old star of the blockbuster movie *Heavenly Creatures*, is in the final stages of filming *Thelma & Louise* in Reading.

**SIR** Simon Rattle and 3,500 young performers broke the record for the world's biggest symphony orchestra with two performances of *Shostakovich's Little Suite No. 2*.

**WOOFIE**, a collie-border terrier who was condemned to death for barking at a postman, had the court order overturned in Edinburgh. *Lord Blair* ordered the dog to be kept, and *Lord Blair* ordered the dog to be kept, and *Lord Blair* ordered the dog to be kept.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY  
November 29 1998

## Shayler ruling stuns MI5

Richard Norton-Taylor

THE future of Britain's severe security laws was in doubt last week after a French court rejected the Government's attempt to extradite David Shayler, the MI5 renegade wanted for making a series of allegations about the activities of the security and intelligence services.

In a decision that stunned Whitehall and came as a huge blow to MI5, an appeals court in Paris ordered Mr. Shayler's release from prison on the grounds that his arrest was unlawful.

In a ruling which his defence lawyers had feared anticipated, Judge Elisabeth Paoletti declared that Mr. Shayler's whistle-blowing was political in nature, and therefore he could not be extradited to face trial.

After a short hearing, Mr. Shayler, who has been locked up in a Saint prison in the French capital since being arrested at the request of British MI5 on August 1, said: "It is a great day for justice and a sad and embarrassing one for MI5 and the British government."

Hugging his girlfriend, Annie Machon — also a former MI5 officer — he called on the Government to "stop trying to persecute me and instead address the issues that I raise". He said he should not have spent four months in prison "just for criticising MI5".

His arrest in August came a year after he made his allegations about MI5 and MI6 activities through a series of newspaper articles. He was picked up after threatening to make further revelations about the intelligence services — including claims of British involvement in a plot to assassinate the Libyan leader, Colonel Gaddafi.

John Wadham, his lawyer and director of Liberty, the civil rights group, said: "Clearly the French court recognised that this was always a politically motivated attempt by the Government to silence one of its critics."

However, government lawyers indicated there were no plans to waive prosecution if Mr. Shayler entered Britain and insisted that allegations preventing British media from publishing any new allegations he may make remained in place.

But in a case which has echoes of the Spycatcher episode a decade ago, Mr. Shayler is free to speak at will to foreign publications; and British media would then be free to report what they say.

The director of the Freedom of Information Campaign, Maurice Frankel, said he hoped the Government would review the Official Secrets Act. "The French don't regard this as something that would be an offence in France, which is saying something about the official secrets law in this country."

Mr. Shayler, aged 32, spent six years in MI5 engagement in some of the most sensitive areas of the agency's work. He joined in 1981, after what he described as scanning the vacuum pages of a nationalist newspaper and coming across an advert which asked: "Willing for Goliath?"

A report written during his recruitment in High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, described him as "a born rebel who likes to sail close to the wind... and suffers neither from nor against authority".

MI5's comments about him are less complimentary. Indeed, they are unprintable.

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## Government cracks down on tax havens to counter scams

Alan Travis

BRITAIN'S offshore tax haven, which shelter more than £50 billion of assets belonging to the world's rich, are to face tough new measures against money laundering and tax evasion.

The move follows a 10-month government inquiry into the financial regulation of the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man, which found that the battle against financial crime was "not being convincingly won" by the crown dependencies.

But the investigation by a retired senior Treasury officer, Andrew Edwards, concludes that financial regulation in the islands is "generally good" and criticisms of secrecy, poor regulation and a reluctance to name criminals are "wild of the mark".

Now the Government is to press the island authorities to set up independent financial crime units, to end the so-called "Sark Lark", which makes ownership by using locals as named directors, and to take a battery of other new measures including co-operating fully with other countries in the pursuit of money laundering and financial fraudsters.

But the Home Office inquiry has a more serious message: full public disclosure of company accounts, arguing that most are just "asset-holding vehicles" rather than trading enterprises, and that many companies would move elsewhere if total disclosure was compulsory.

The Edwards report confirms the existence of offshore banking scams such as the "Sark Lark". It says that the 575 residents of the tiny island of Sark held around 15,000 company directorships, many of them in name only, to mask the true beneficial owners or "shadow directors".

These "Sark Lark" directors meant the companies could ensure secrecy and obtain tax-free status. The Edwards report says the practice is not confined to Sark but exists in all the crown dependencies.

The Home Office minister, Lord Williams, will hold a series of meetings in January with the island authorities to draw up an action plan for putting the new measures into practice.

"The island authorities welcomed the Edwards report, arguing that it was a vindication of the high standards of financial regulation already in operation. Peter Parnham, of Carney's advisory and accountancy, said measures were already in place which ensured the "Sark Lark" was ending.

"The report is a wholesale vindication of the way the financial industry has been regulated over the past 20 years. We think the report is very positive," he said.

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**G27 Sherry & Christmas Cake**  
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**G28 Highland Hamper**  
100g Sliced Smoked Scottish Salmon, 250g Ball of Honey Meats Cheddar Cheese, 75g Walkers' Shortbread, 200g Paterson's Milk Chocolate Shortbread, 227g Arden Strawberry & Raspberry Preserves, 227g Arden Marmalade with Caramel Sauce, 400g Walkers' Scottish Fruit Cake. Packed in a palm leaf basket. £31.30

**G29 Salmon, Cheese & Wine**  
200g Sliced Smoked Scottish Salmon, a 225g Melrose Farmhouse Cheddar Cheese, 140g Wedge of Fine Blue Stilton, 100g Tods of Olney Traditional Oatcakes and a bottle of Muscadet Sèvre et Maine, Henri Valon 1996. £36.80

**G30 The Strand**  
400g Traditional Pudding Cake, 375g Old English Christmas Pudding, 6 Hoppers Butter Mince Pies with Bramish Stout, 198g Devon Cooked Ham, 188g Devon Turkey Roll, 425g Bakers Cream of Leek Soup, 411g John West Peach Slices, 340g Hartleys Black Cherry Jam, 45g Roses Orange & Lemon Marmalade, 100g Dry Roasted Peanuts, 200g Sheriffs Chocolate Chip & Hazelnut Biscuits, 150g Paterson's Shortbread Petalot Tarts, 130g Cadbury's Roses Chocolate and 200g Pilsener Exclusive Chocolates. £29.50

**G31 Christmas Gift Basket**  
Half bottle Sauternes Chateau de Bordeaux 1995, 150g Fudges Christmas Stollen Cake, 220g Cakes Traditional Plum Pudding with Cider, 70g Quince de Gasconne Pate, 100g Traclemans Grandeur Butter, 227g Arden Strawberry Preserves with Almonds & Cinnamon, 200g Double Chocolate Cheese, 75g Walkers' Highland Oatcakes, 125g Lysals of London Suggared Almonds and 150g Benedict's Mint Crisps. Packed in a palm leaf basket. £38.70

**G32 Festive Gift Basket**  
A bottle Chateau Haut Pousignat Bordeaux Superior 1996, 600g Decorated Fruit Cake, 200g Sliced Smoked Scottish Salmon, 170g Blue Stilton cheese in a Ceramic Jar, 75g Walkers' Highland Oatcakes, 125g H R Highways Walnut Scottish Fruit Cake, 12 Ridges Cocktails Mince Pies and 200g Luxury Truffle Chocolates. £59.70

**G33 Luxury Pate, Cheese & Wine Basket**  
A bottle of Cotes du Rhone Louis Bonard 1996, a 250g Moll of Melrose Scottish Cheddar Cheese, a 200g Double Gloucester Cheese, 140g Fine Blue Stilton, 150g Epicure Petalot Pate, 500g John West New Potatoes, 411g John West Peach Slices, 185g Hartleys Cranberry Sauce, 340g Hartleys Black Cherry Jam, 45g Roses Orange & Lemon Marmalade, 200g Double Gloucester Cheese, 200g McVitie's Savoury Cakes as Biscuits, 100g Dry Roasted Peanuts, 100g Walkers' Chocolate Mini Cakes, 150g Paterson's Shortbread and 200g Pilsener Exclusive Chocolates. £41.50

**G34 Yuletide Fare**  
400g Biscuits, Cakes & Candy, 375g Old English Christmas Pudding, 6 Hoppers Butter Mince Pies with Bramish Stout, 198g Devon Cooked Ham, 188g Devon Turkey Roll, 425g Bakers Cream of Leek Soup, 411g John West Peach Slices, 340g Hartleys Black Cherry Jam, 45g Roses Orange & Lemon Marmalade, 100g Dry Roasted Peanuts, 200g Sheriffs Chocolate Chip & Hazelnut Biscuits, 150g Paterson's Shortbread Petalot Tarts, 130g Cadbury's Roses Chocolate and 200g Pilsener Exclusive Chocolates. £41.50

**G35 Christmas Gift Box**  
A bottle Chateau Haut Pousignat Bordeaux Superior 1996, a bottle Muscadet de Sèvre et Maine, 198g, 140g Fine Blue Stilton Cheese, a 200g Double Gloucester Cheese, 125g Biscuits, 340g Hartleys Cranberry Sauce, 340g Hartleys Black Cherry Jam, 45g Roses Orange & Lemon Marmalade, 200g Double Gloucester Cheese, 200g McVitie's Savoury Cakes as Biscuits, 100g Dry Roasted Peanuts, 100g Walkers' Chocolate Mini Cakes, 150g Paterson's Shortbread and 200g Pilsener Exclusive Chocolates. £41.50

**G36 Festive Gift Basket**  
A bottle Chateau Haut Pousignat Bordeaux Superior 1996, 600g Decorated Fruit Cake, 200g Sliced Smoked Scottish Salmon, 170g Blue Stilton cheese in a Ceramic Jar, 75g Walkers' Highland Oatcakes, 125g H R Highways Walnut Scottish Fruit Cake, 12 Ridges Cocktails Mince Pies and 200g Luxury Truffle Chocolates. £59.70

**G37 Festive Gift Basket**  
A bottle Chateau Haut Pousignat Bordeaux Superior 1996, 600g Decorated Fruit Cake, 200g Sliced Smoked Scottish Salmon, 170g Blue Stilton cheese in a Ceramic Jar, 75g Walkers' Highland Oatcakes, 125g H R Highways Walnut Scottish Fruit Cake, 12 Ridges Cocktails Mince Pies and 200g Luxury Truffle Chocolates. £59.70

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## Guardian Reporters

Mr Blunkett's stance since the policy of local parental choice was outlined by Labour in 1995 has been that education policy should be driven by the needs of the 24,000

Mr Green told a committee of MPs studying the regulations:

The Government argued that parents would be well aware of the issues at stake during local campaigns that were likely to precede any ballot. It said that the ballot question was approved by the Electoral Reform Society.

Grammar schools have attracted fierce support from the parents of children attending them, partly due to a strong performance in exams reflecting the pupils' ability on entry to the school, as well as the quality of teaching and high aspirations.

In other areas, the ballot will be restricted to parents in feeder primaries and private prep schools sending five or more children to the grammar school. The Campaign for State Education (Case), a pro-comprehensive lobbying group, said this would disenfranchise many families with a big stake in the outcome of the vote.

Leading the counter-attack is the National Grammar Schools Association, whose main role is to provide information for parents confused about the technicalities of the ballots, according to chairman Brian Wills-Pope. His organisation has also received representations from most surviving grammar schools.

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November 29, 1928

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Albert Baynor used the ancient Three Fields System of continual farming.

## Farm sale steps back to medieval times

Stubbornly refusing to adapt to modern methods, the tenants follow the Three Fields System, whereby the land is held in

Albert Rayner, one of the jurors, is now in his 70s and about to retire, so Carter Jonas, land agents for the Crown Estate which owns Laxton, will market the tenancy of his farm.

Mr Rayner's farm is tiny by modern standards, a mere 107 acres, but comes with a house in the village, 59 acres of conventionally farmed land, 48 acres of commonly farmed lea and the responsibility to maintain a system of agriculture and law unchanged for 500 years.

"It makes more sense every day, in terms of conserving the richness of the countryside," said Reg Rone, the clerk of the court since 1950.

## Social worker killed

## David Brindley

The incident comes as the Government is poised to unveil a package of measures, and investment of up to £1 billion, to overhaul the provision of care in the community and improve safeguards for care work-

Wandsworth has recently started to make £10 million in social services cuts, but a spokesman said that no savings were being made in mental health services.

While many independent polls have shown the British public to be wary of the introduction of genetically modified foods, this is the first

Monsanto's strategy in Britain has been shown to have been one of persuading "a socio-economic élite" of the benefits of the technology, so that

In a further development, the Ministry of Agriculture in Britain has howed to pressure from the biotechnology industry and abandoned plans to insist on full-scale crop trials for GM crops.

## Genetic food faces crisis

**John Vlatas**

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## Clinton and Kim Defend Policy Toward Pyongyang

Kevin Sullivan and  
John F. Harris in Seoul

PRESIDENT CLINTON and South Korean President Kim Dae Jung last weekend delivered impassioned defenses of their policies of engagement toward North Korea, in the face of seemingly belligerent actions by Pyongyang.

Asked if provocation by North Korea could undermine U.S. and South Korean policy, President Clinton responded, "Of course it could. But . . . I am absolutely convinced that the policies we have followed together have been correct."

While Clinton and Kim stand united in their desire to coax North Korea into the sunlight with economic and political engagement, conservative critics in both countries are increasing their calls to give North Korea more stick and less carrot. That criticism, which has taken on new urgency in recent weeks, threatens to scuttle delicate engagement policies that Clinton and Kim have spent years building and defending.

Members of the U.S. Congress and many South Korean officials have expressed concern at recent reports that Pyongyang is increasing its production and export of ballistic missiles, and that it is building a massive underground facility that may be related to reviving its nuclear weapons program.

Even as Clinton and Kim spoke inside the ornate presidential Blue

House, legislators, academia and people on the streets of Seoul were joining grave doubts about North Korea's intentions.

"Where do we draw the line?" said Lee Jung Hoon, political science professor at Yonsei University in Seoul. "Aren't we being a little too cozy and comfortable and relaxed toward North Korea, when their position really hasn't changed at all?"

Shoemaker Chang Sun Il, 54, said, "Now is not the time to pour our money into North Korea. . . . North Korea is up to something and we are adding fuel on the fire. It's like pouring water on a bonfire."

Clinton and Kim were keenly aware of the building storm of criticism and defended their policies as realistic and pragmatic.

Kim called his "sunshine policy" of engagement the most "realistic" policy toward North Korea, warning that Seoul would get tough with Pyongyang if it does not explain the purpose of the mysterious underground facility.

Clinton called engagement one element of a "clear-eyed mixture" of diplomacy and deterrence, including the military option presented by 37,000 U.S. troops stationed in South Korea. And he warned that Congress will abandon support for key initiatives toward North Korea if Pyongyang does not come clean on its missile program and nuclear ambitions.



Vincent van Gogh's 1889 self-portrait, 'Without Beard'. Last week it became the third most valuable painting sold at auction when it fetched \$71 million at Christie's sale in New York.

## Israeli Roads Carve up West Bank

Lee Hockstader in the West Bank

ON THE EVE of Israel's first troop withdrawal from the West Bank in two years, the government is expropriating large swaths of Palestinian land to build bypass roads for Jewish settlers.

The roads are part of an unintended effect of the American-brokered interim peace accord, known as the Wye River Memorandum, signed last month at the White House. The agreement, under which Israel will turn over an additional 13 percent of the West Bank to Palestinian control, was meant to advance the cause of Middle East peace while lowering the political temperature in the West Bank.

Instead, the accord has ignited fresh tensions as Israeli bulldozers have carved new bypass roads to areas in the West Bank where Jewish settlers rush to make a claim before it was too late.

"What kind of peace is this?" said Imad Safim, 25, a Palestinian farmer near the Arab village of Al Khader, just south of Jerusalem. "If peace means losing our land, what good is it?"

A dozen new roads—more than 50 miles worth in all—will be snarled next week when some U.S. Bank settlers to skirt Palestinian communities en route to other Jewish enclaves, as well as to avoid proper. The government insists the new roads are a security lifeline for Jewish settlers living in the West Bank, but critics say the roads are more isolated when the Israeli troops withdraw, leaving 40 percent of the West Bank in Palestinian hands.

"Our goal is to prevent confrontations between the two groups," said Shlomo Drot, spokesman for Israel's civil administration in the occupied territories.

Few Palestinians regard road-building in the West Bank as anything but about security, let alone convenience. They say the intent of the new roads, and their effect, is to strangle the natural growth of Palestinian settlements, to divide and control the West Bank by slicing up and to defeat hopes for the creation of a Palestinian state.

"This is Israel's policy," said Abdulhadi Ghadeer, mayor of Al-Khader, a Palestinian village already hemmed in by two sides of Israeli bypass roads.

Israel's cabinet, which was nudged by American pressure into a pullback from the West Bank, it never really wanted at the same meeting in which it assented to the withdrawal. But the roads are already under way, and the plan is to complete all 12 by the end of a three-stage pullback with next February.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY  
November 29, 1998

## Shooting Too Much Too Often

Jeff Leen, Jo Craven, David Jackson and Bar Horwitz

WASHINGTON D.C.'s Metropolitan Police Department shot and killed more people per resident in the 1990s than any other American city police force.

Many shootings were acts of courage and even heroism. But internal police files and court records reveal a pattern of recklessness and indiscriminate gunplay by officers sent into the streets with inadequate training and little oversight, an eight-month Washington Post investigation has found.

Washington's officers fire their weapons at more than double the rate of police in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago or Miami. Deaths and injuries in D.C. police shooting cases have resulted in nearly \$8 million in court settlements and judgments against the District in the last six months alone.

"We shoot too often, and we shoot too much when we do shoot," said Executive Assistant Chief of Police Terrance W. Gainer, who became the department's second in command in May.

The shootings involve a small proportion of the District's 3,550 officers. But the details of individual cases can be chilling even to police veterans. An off-duty police officer

out walking in August 1995 and 11 times while trying to stop and detain a motorist who had hit a utility pole and left the scene. An off-duty police officer fishing in May 1995 shot an unarmed motorist who was coming up the Washington River to skirt Palestinian communities en route to other Jewish enclaves, as well as to avoid proper. The government insists the new roads are a security lifeline for Jewish settlers living in the West Bank, but critics say the roads are more isolated when the Israeli troops withdraw, leaving 40 percent of the West Bank in Palestinian hands.

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The roads were approved by Israel's cabinet, which was nudged by American pressure into a pullback from the West Bank, it never really wanted at the same meeting in which it assented to the withdrawal. But the roads are already under way, and the plan is to complete all 12 by the end of a three-stage pullback with next February.



Professional policing usually leaves suspects alive

decade, 19 officers have shot themselves or other officers accidentally. Also, while some mistakes likely were undetected, others may have exploded during the storm.

Furthermore, officials said that large amounts of money and debris will hamper efforts to locate and destroy mines, as will storm devastation inflicted on a new mine-clearing base that had just been set up in Honduras near the Nicaraguan border.

"The complexity has changed and the urgency level has increased. The size of the task, if you will, has expanded," said William A. McDonough, a retired U.S. Army colonel and senior consultant to the Organization of American States (OAS) for the land mine cleanup program that it is coordinating in Central America. "The infor-

Washington from 1990 to 1997 — a number surpassed by only a half-dozen other U.S. cities, each much bigger than the District.

Criminologists say no single factor fully explains police shooting trends. The Post considered five factors for Washington and 26 other large cities — population, violent crime, homicide, size of the force and violent crime arrests. By each of these measures, Washington is

above the average for large cities in the number of police shootings. Still, violent streets do not entirely explain the rise of D.C. police shootings in this decade. Fatal shootings by Washington police more than doubled from 1992 to 1995, while homicides dropped from the record peak in 1991.

Police shootings began to rise at the beginning of the decade with a large infusion of new, ill-prepared recruits and the adoption of the lighter, highly advanced Glock 9mm handgun as the department's service weapon. By the mid-1990s, shootings by officers had doubled to record levels even as a surge in civilian police administrative failures to accurately track shooting patterns, or correct acknowledged deficiencies in gun skills.

The Post's investigation revealed that, in the last five years, D.C. officers have killed 57 people — 30 in 1993, 17 in 1994, 10 in 1995, and three in 1996. During that period, 1,640 shooting incidents — 40 more than the Los Angeles Police Department, which has more than double the officers and serves six times the population. Since 1990, Washington police have shot and killed 86 people.

Nearly 90 percent of the District's officers who used their weapons in 1996 failed to meet the District's rigorous standards for using the Glock's magazine handgun, a construction that requires a high degree of training and skill. There have been more than 120 unintentional discharges of the gun in the past

## Hurricane Mitch Disrupts Mine-Clearing Operation

Serge F. Kovalevski

THOUSANDS of land mines still buried in Central America from the region's civil wars may have been scattered by flooding and mudslides caused by Hurricane Mitch. Dislodged mines have killed at least two people, posing new safety hazards and disrupting an international effort to clear the infamous of the "mine-free" region in the world — have been set back as a result of the worst natural disaster to strike the isthmus in decades.

Mine removal operations in Honduras, where an estimated 2,000 mines remain, have been halted for about three weeks, and only limited work is being conducted in Nicaragua. In the meantime, the program's 27 supervisors and 400 technicians performing have been assisting in storm relief efforts.

In Nicaragua, where the army had planted mines to protect key infrastructure, the task of repairing many of the 50 bridges damaged or destroyed by Mitch has been made more difficult due to uncertainty about where the explosives may now be located. "It is hard to do the repair work until emergency demining has been done," McDonough said.

In the case of Honduras, most personnel and injuries have occurred in small, agricultural towns along the Nicaraguan border. Although Honduras had no war of its own, it served as a staging area for U.S.-backed contra forces in their fight against Nicaragua's Sandinista forces.

Officials involved in a multinational mine removal effort said that while devices of war continue to kill and injure people long after peace was negotiated, there are other pressing consequences concerning the prevalence of mines. Fear about the devices has discouraged the cultivation of vast areas, hurt economic development, impeded the repatriation of refugees and restricted employment opportunities, observers said.

## Arms Draw China and Russia Closer

John Pomfret in China

THE scene at the Sukhoi aircraft company's bustling office here at the Zhuhai air show last week reminded one of the weapons engineer of the "old days" when China and Russia walked together on the road to Communism.

In a small room, a Chinese delegation negotiated with officials from the aerospace firm. Russian officials said the Chinese are interested in adding Sukhoi's Su-30 fighter bomber to their arsenal, along with state-of-the-art anti-air missile. China is a good customer to Russia's arms manufacturers — it already owns Russian fighters, submarines and anti-aircraft batteries.

"China and Russia [used to be] allies," said Vladimir Kononov, the lead designer of the Su-37, one of Russia's top fighters. "Perhaps that day will come again."

Fifty years ago, a shared ideology brought China and Russia together before that relationship degenerated into recriminations and border skirmishes in the 1960s. Today, China's cash and a concern about the United States' dominance of world affairs are fueling a renaissance in ties between the two giants.

On Sunday, Jiang Zemin traveled to Russia for the sixth summit between the two countries and the first informal "no-necktie" meeting with Boris Yeltsin, the ailing Russian president. Jiang is expected to offer food as well as cash to aid Russia's economy, Chinese sources said.

Russia's ambassador to Beijing, Igor Rogachev, told China's official New China News Agency last week that the trip was a sign that decades

of hostility between Russia and China had been way to a powerful "strategic partnership" that aims to forge a "new order" to challenge U.S. domination of the world arena.

China has backed Russia's role in a missile program and nuclear ambitions. In supporting Yugoslavia's President Slobodan Milosevic of Kosovo and echoed Moscow's calls for a peaceful settlement of the standoff with Iraq. Chinese officials have noted publicly that Russia sides with China in its opposition to U.S. plans for a theater missile defense network in Asia.

No one expects Beijing's ties to Moscow to eclipse China's relations with Washington. China's trade with Russia, for example, is only a fraction of its trade with the United States. \$4.12 billion with Russia for the first nine months of 1998 compared with more than \$80 billion in the same period with the U.S.

CHINA'S shopping spree in Moscow comes when the rest of Asia is reeling from an economic crisis that has gutted arms acquisition programs. This has left China, Taiwan, Singapore and, to a lesser extent, Japan as the only countries bolstering their arsenals — raising concern in other Asian capitals.

Thailand, for example, can only afford to deploy its 11,485-ton aircraft carrier once a month. It also has canceled the purchase of eight U.S.-made F/A-18 fighters. Malaysia has delayed plans to buy its first submarines and 300 helicopters for its army air corps. South Korea's defense forces delayed buying \$1 billion in U.S. arms. And Indonesia canceled the purchase of 12 Russian Su-30 multi-role fighters.

Russian officials have told their Western counterparts that Russia is not supplying China with its technology.

"The line out of the Russian Embassy is that anyone privy to all the details of these deals is not that comfortable that Russia is giving away the farm," said a Western diplomat in Beijing. "Also, they have a pretty healthy contempt for the Chinese military."

"We are selling the Chinese very little," said Lieutenant-General Vladimir Mikhailov, the vice commander of Russia's air force. Mikhailov was standing in a plush function room of the Zhuhai Hotel, having just exchanged toasts with several Chinese officials associated with the arms trade. "But if they want to buy the Su-30, we will sell it to them."

Defense officials think the Su-30 fighter-bomber would mark a significant upgrade for China's air force. Richard Fisher, a specialist on the Chinese military at the conservative Heritage Foundation in Washington, said, selling the Su-30 to China would give Beijing "the basis of a modern strike capability."

Eric McDavid, a former U.S. Navy admiral and defense attaché in Beijing, agreed that "Washington would worry about more advanced fighters and quiet, diesel submarines that China might purchase from Russia."

"However," he added, "we should keep all this in perspective. China can use these things to make poor lives, more miserable, in a future Taiwan crisis. Nevertheless, these aircraft will not allow the PLA to surpass all its shortcomings and become a power able to threaten American power in Asia. The PLA is coming from a position of truly extraordinary backwardness and obsolescence."

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John Pomfret in China





1



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Closing date: 6 January 1999. Interview dates: 21 or 22 January 1999.

### Programme Accountant Sierra Leone

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GUARDIAN WEEKLY  
November 29 1998

Microsoft is at war with its own government over unfair trading but, as Victor Keegan reports, the real threat to its future lies closer to home

## Reality check required



Bill Gates

IT'S lunchtime in the spacious, polished restaurant. The place is alive with millionaires — though you would never guess from their casual attire and deceptively relaxed demeanour.

We are at the Seattle headquarters of Microsoft, the most aggressively successful company in the world. It is all the better for it. Microsoft is the most successful company in the world where the direction point (and just Gates) are designed by shareholders asking for more money, presumably in the hope that Dollar Bills will be worth more in time than dollar bills.

Microsoft is changing on several fronts. Most immediately, the American Dream is at war with its own government over alleged abuses of its monopoly power over a whole range of business practices. Gates and everyone I met on the Redmond campus vehemently resist all of these changes and promises to refute them blow-by-blow when Microsoft has its turn in court.

Gates had better be right because the alternative could be the puncturing of what others see as Microsoft's corporate pride and the eventual humbling of this supposedly self-confident company, one that acts as if its motto is "What's Good for Microsoft is Good for America". Maybe it is. But

shares has, unexpectedly, almost doubled to \$110, bringing the personal stake of chairman Bill Gates (pictured left) to \$82.1 billion. The rampaging stock price has made many of its 28,000 employees into millionaires through a generous stock option scheme.

But behind the deceptive campus calm, potentially seismic changes are taking place. Serious questions are being asked, inside as well as outside the company, about whether this steamrolling profit machine — with \$17.2 billion cash in the bank — is about to go into reverse gear.

None of these worries were obvious at the recent annual meeting of Microsoft in the Bellevue suburb of Seattle. Gates and his board were given an ovation as they entered and another when the meeting finished. Microsoft must be the only company in the world where the direction point (and just Gates) are designed by shareholders asking for more money, presumably in the hope that Dollar Bills will be worth more in time than dollar bills.

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But behind the deceptive campus calm, potentially seismic changes are taking place. Serious questions are being asked, inside as well as outside the company, about whether this steamrolling profit machine — with \$17.2 billion cash in the bank — is about to go into reverse gear.

None of these worries were obvious at the recent annual meeting of Microsoft in the Bellevue suburb of Seattle. Gates and his board were given an ovation as they entered and another when the meeting finished. Microsoft must be the only company in the world where the direction point (and just Gates) are designed by shareholders asking for more money, presumably in the hope that Dollar Bills will be worth more in time than dollar bills.

Microsoft is changing on several fronts. Most immediately, the American Dream is at war with its own government over alleged abuses of its monopoly power over a whole range of business practices. Gates and everyone I met on the Redmond campus vehemently resist all of these changes and promises to refute them blow-by-blow when Microsoft has its turn in court.

Gates had better be right because the alternative could be the puncturing of what others see as Microsoft's corporate pride and the eventual humbling of this supposedly self-confident company, one that acts as if its motto is "What's Good for Microsoft is Good for America". Maybe it is. But

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Microsoft may not need the justice department to cut it down to size. Top management is worried that the virtuous circle of recent years that has propelled the company ever upwards could soon turn into a downward spin.

Greg Maffei, chief financial officer, flashes a battery of slides on the wall to show how past success was driven by 30 per cent annual revenue increases and falling costs (down from 16.9 per cent in 1993 to only 8.5 per cent last year). This produced high profit margins leading to a soaring share price that hugely boosted the value of investors (through stock options), making Microsoft the place where motivated movers wanted to be.

Now, he argues, turnover will slacken because sales of PCs — on which the Windows operating system depends — are reaching saturation point, while the main reason for the recent decline in the cost of goods sold (the switch from floppy disks to CD-ROMs for distribution) has run its course. The cash benefit from the fall in costs has been used to finance research and development — running at a very impressive \$3 billion for the 1998 fiscal year (31 per cent of net sales).

Microsoft's revenue growth slackens while costs rise. It will be caught in a double squeeze. Any fall in its stock value will make it much more difficult to attract bright new recruits — so the company will have to pay higher salaries, instead, adding more to its cost base and threatening R&D spending upon which long-term growth depends.

At present, according to Maffei, most recruits take a pay cut when they join because of the future attraction of share options.

Another cultural change is that employees — the famous Micro-

softers — aren't quite the workaholics they once were. The barometer of this is the company car park. Mike Murray, vice-president human resources, claims there are lots more spare parking lots at 6.45pm than there used to be seven or eight years ago. Why? Employees are not longer slaves. They are getting older (average age now 33) and more than half are now married, including Gates himself.

Microsoft still keeps a tight grip on its golden goose, a 90 per cent market share not only of computer operating systems but of the two leading software packages that run on them — the Word word processor and the Excel spreadsheet. Refusing to make the same mistake as IBM, which took its eye off the ball when under government investigation, Microsoft is using part of its huge cash reserves to move into all of the avenues opened up by the information revolution, with a determined ambition to dominate them all. Mostly it buys small companies in order to develop them. Corporate policy to "embrace and extend" has led the company into HotMail (the



Microsoft's Redmond campus, driven by the scent of stock options

free e-mail start-up), WebTV, cable TV, wireless telephony, speech recognition, video transmission, electronic payments and so on.

The most resounding tug-of-war gathered from Redmond is the ultimate refusal — bordering on inability — even to admit that Microsoft is in a monopoly position. Let alone whether it is exploiting it against the public interest. Microsoft's president, Steve Ballmer, candidly denies that the company has done anything wrong or that it might even change its spots as a result of the EU's inquiry. Ballmer insists that Microsoft has behaved with propriety "100 per cent at all times". Not 95 per cent, or even 90 per cent as lesser mortals might grudgingly admit.

Notwithstanding its unprecedented cry that its position in the market place is fragile, Microsoft has a self-confidence that borders on hubris.

And, as in Greek — not to mention geek — tragedies, that is what eventually might bring it down if the justice department doesn't do it first. Microsoft has nothing to fear except perhaps... itself.

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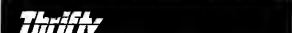
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